

## 1 Samuel 25:14-44 - Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

(13) Then David said to his men, "Every man gird on his sword." So every man girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And about four hundred men went with David, and two hundred stayed with the supplies.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is David's reaction towards Nabal is the opposite as it was towards Saul.
- Moreover, Nabal is not attempting to murder David, but Saul is. This begs the question of why it is David would react so differently here.
- I'm of the belief that it had to do with Saul's position as the Lord's anointed king, as opposed to Nabal who does not hold such a position.

- The reason I believe this is because often times we, like David, will treat our superiors differently than someone we perceive to be inferior.
- Herein lies a lesson we would do well to learn from what David does here, or perhaps better said, what David should not have done here.
- Namely, David reacting towards him in the way he did under the banner of Nabal being seen as his equal at best, or beneath him at worst.

One commentator said it this way, "David didn't show Nabal the same kindness and longsuffering that he showed to Saul. In just the previous chapter, David spared Saul's life when Saul not only insulted David but also actually attacked him and tried to kill him. David was able to be kind and longsuffering to Saul, but it seems to have been harder to do it towards someone he perceived as his equal or lower than himself. Often, this is true measure of our character - not how we treat our superiors, but how we treat our equals or those "beneath" us in some way or another."

- Here's where I'm going with all of this, sometimes instead of the Saul's and even the Goliath's getting to us, it's the Nabal's who get to us.
- Let me explain, David has just tasted from the sweet cup of victory with respect to what he did with Saul in sparing his life when in the cave.
- It's in those times, on the heels of a victory that we can become the most vulnerable to a defeat because we're prone to let our guard down.

1 Corinthians 10:12 NIV (12) So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

- One of the lessons I'm learning in my own personal walk with Jesus Christ is that I'm prone to fall in the areas of my greatest strengths.
- The reason being is, I think I stand firm in that particular area, and as such, I develop a false sense of assurance and confidence in myself.
- What comes packaged with the self-confidence is the component of pride and as the Proverbs are replete with, pride comes before the fall.
- Peter is the poster child for failing and falling in his area of greatest strength vis-à-vis the aforementioned component of self-confidence.

Luke 22:31-32 NIV "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. (32) But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

- Notice Jesus prays that Peter's faith won't fail instead of his courage won't fail. I point this out because courage was his greatest strength.
- It's for this reason that the same Peter that had the courage to take on the entire Roman army didn't have the courage to stand up to a girl.
- The point being is that Peter's greatest fall and failure came in the very area of Peter's greatest area of strength namely that of his courage.

Louis Neely, of Warehouse Christian Ministries, said it this way: "In our greatest areas of strengths come our greatest perils."

- Thankfully Peter denying the Lord three times didn't have the final word in his life such that Jesus would end up restoring him three times.

John 21:15-17 NIV When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." (16) Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." (17) The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

- (14) Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them. (15) But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. (16) They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep. (17) Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him."

- This response on the part of this servant, whom were told witnessed Nabal's foolish lies to David's men, should not come as any surprise.
- This for two reasons, the first of which is that he is wise enough in and of himself to realize that he needs to warn Abigail of what Nabal did.
- Notice he even wisely tells her why he's warning her about Nabal instead of going directly to Nabal saying no one can talk to the scoundrel.

- The second reason this response on the part of this servant shouldn't come as any surprise is because he realizes that this was the David.
- More specifically, the David that killed ten's of thousands not to mention one very famous uncircumcised Philistine by the name of Goliath.
- Point being is he, in his wisdom, realized what David's son Solomon would write in the Proverb's yet future as it relates to a fool in his folly.

Proverbs 17:12 NIV Better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs than a fool in his folly.

(18) Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred *loaves* of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted *grain*, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded *them* on donkeys. (19) And she said to her servants, "Go on before me; see, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. (20) So it was, as she rode on the donkey, that she went down under cover of the hill; and there were David and his men, coming down toward her, and she met them. (21) Now David had said, "Surely in vain I have protected all that this *fellow* has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good. (22) May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who *belong* to him by morning light."

- Clearly, David is totally reacting in the flesh as he seeks to mete out revenge by taking matters into his own hands in order to kill everyone.
- Notice that conspicuously absent from the narrative is any mention of David seeking the Lord concerning Nabal insulting and rejecting him.
- What happened to the David who sought the Lord in prayer before setting out to battle and even waiting for confirmation before setting out?
- I can't get over the striking contrasts between good and evil that's woven into the fabric of the account related to David, Nabal and Abigail.

One commentator notes this contrast best when he writes, "At face value this is ... about good and evil – about good and evil people, and good and evil actions. Abigail is good, Nabal evil. Nabal does an evil action; David, a good person is about to do an evil action in return but is stopped in time by Abigail's good actions."

- Notice also that David says, "he has repaid me evil for good," in verse 21 this because of what it says in Proverbs 17:13, which is after 12.

**Proverbs 17:12 NIV** Better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs than a fool in his folly.

**Proverbs 17:13 NIV** If a man pays back evil for good, evil will never leave his house.

(23) Now when Abigail saw David, she dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground.  
 (24) So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, *on me let* this iniquity *be!* And please let your maid servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maid servant. (25) Please, let not my lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name *is*, so *is* he: Nabal *is* his name, and folly *is* with him! But I, your maid servant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent. (26) Now therefore, my lord, *as* the LORD lives and *as* your soul lives, since the LORD has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal. (27) And now this present which your maid servant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. (28) Please forgive the trespass of your maid servant. For the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days. (29) Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, *as from* the pocket of a sling. (30) And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, (31) that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maid servant."

- This is one of the most fascinating accounts in all of the pages of Holy Writ. I say that because of how powerful Abigail is in stopping David.
- She gets him to slow down and step back to see the big picture, which is that he will be the next king of Israel, and this is unworthy of him.
- She also tells him to let the Lord defend him. If He defended him against Goliath and Saul who sought to kill him, He will do so with Nabal.

- She doesn't stop there, she also reminds him every so gently and graciously, that if he does this, he will regret this for the rest of his life.
- To me, this is textbook when it comes to patiently persuading someone to reconsider a decision they make and course of action they take.
- What makes her gentle answer so remarkable is David could make end her marriage problems by killing her scoundrel fool of a husband.

**Proverbs 25:15 NIV** Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone.

**Proverbs 15:1-2 NIV** A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (2) The tongue of the wise commands knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.

(32) Then David said to Abigail: "Blessed *is* the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! (33) And blessed *is* your advice and blessed *are* you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. (34) For indeed, *as* the LORD God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!" (35) So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person."

- I'm not sure if it's possible to adequately grasp how profound this is. I say that because she's just brought him back to his senses.
- So much so, David admits he's wrong and shows a woman who has just corrected him in front of four hundred of his men, such respect.
- I can't help but think that his men were endeared to him even more by him doing this. It's a good leader who will admit they were wrong.

(36) Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* very drunk; therefore she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light. (37) So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became *like* a stone. (38) Then it happened, *after* about ten days, that the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.

- And so it ends for this rich fool who was so arrogant and antagonistic when it came to everything he owned being his. Well, not any more!
- We don't know if he had a heart attack or a stroke, we do know while Abigail could save him from David's wrath but not God's judgment.
- It's been suggested that the Parable of the Rich Fool that Jesus taught in Luke 12:15-21, may have been directed at the likes of a Nabal.

**Luke 12:15-21 NIV** Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (16) And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. (17) He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' (18) "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (19) And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." (20) "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' (21) "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

(39) So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed *be* the LORD, who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head." And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. (40) When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife." (41) Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maid servant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." (42) So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife. (43) David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and so both of them were his wives. (44) But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who *was* from Gallim.

- We end the chapter with David taking Abigail as his wife after Saul gave Michal to another man, which means this was a second marriage.
- Also, David takes other wives, which brings up the issue of whether or not this was sinful. Some believe it was others believe it was not.
- Regardless of if it was or not, one thing is for sure, David's married life with more than one wife was never blessed throughout his entire life.